

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 725

By Reedy

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of country music legend and broadcast icon Ralph Emery.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were saddened to learn of the passing of Ralph Emery, a dedicated professional who is widely regarded as the most popular radio and television broadcast personality in the history of country music; and

WHEREAS, a native of Tennessee, Mr. Emery spent six decades promoting country music performers on radio and television and received the ultimate honor when he was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2007; and

WHEREAS, renowned as the dean of country music broadcasters, Mr. Emery believed strongly in both the genre and its artists and devoted his illustrious career to broadening country music's audience and appeal; and

WHEREAS, born in McEwen, Ralph Emery paid his tuition at the Tennessee School of Broadcasting by working several odd jobs; and

WHEREAS, in 1957, at the tender age of twenty-four, he began working the graveyard shift at Nashville's WSM-AM, a 50,000-watt country music powerhouse that broadcast the Grand Ole Opry live; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Emery possessed an intimate, easygoing on-air presence from the very beginning, and his informal, open-door policy on the show encouraged guests to drop by unannounced to chat and spin their latest records; and

WHEREAS, a gifted conversationalist, Ralph Emery utilized this talent to introduce his audience to the humor and humanity of his guests, and from 1957 to 1972, many country music legends made impromptu appearances on Mr. Emery's show; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Emery's early success on WSM also led to a concurrent slot as an announcer on the Grand Ole Opry; he also hosted *Opry Almanac*, an Opry-themed television broadcast; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Emery's career continued to flourish with *The Ralph Emery Show*, an early-morning local television broadcast that earned a reputation within the industry for developing unsung talent during its run from 1972 to 1991; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Emery hosted the nationally syndicated weekly television series *Pop Goes the Country* from 1974 to 1980; he perhaps reached the zenith of his popularity as the host of *Nashville Now*, a prime-time broadcast that aired weeknights on the Nashville Network from 1983 to 1993; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Emery even tried his hand at recording with "Hello Fool," an answer record to Faron Young's "Hello Walls" that reached the top ten of the country charts in 1961, and an album, *Songs for Children*, in 1989; and

WHEREAS, he continued to host country-themed programming into the 2000s, via *Ralph Emery Live*, a production, later renamed *Ralph Emery's Memories*, that aired on cable television from 2007 to 2015; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his much-deserved inclusion in the Country Music Hall of Fame, Mr. Emery was inducted into the National Radio Hall of Fame in 2010; and

WHEREAS, he is survived by his wife of fifty-four years, Joy Kott Emery; three sons, Steve, Michael, and Kit; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, Ralph Emery brought dignity and class to country music, and his efforts in support of the industry earned national respect for country music, while broadening its audience significantly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE

CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of country music legend and broadcast icon Ralph Emery, reflecting fondly upon his many contributions to the country music industry as a radio and television broadcaster.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we extend our sympathy and condolences to Mr. Emery's family and many friends and fans.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.